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President: Mr. KOVANDA (Czech Republic)

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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGAINST THE ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SALE, DEMAND, TRAFFIC AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTICS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGAINST THE ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SALE, DEMAND, TRAFFIC AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTICS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES (continued) (E/1996/18, E/1996/57)

Mr. WLOSOWICZ (Poland) said that his country's experience confirmed the unfavourable trends described in the informative report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances and related activities (E/1996/57).

Three factors should guide the international community in its drug control efforts. Firstly, it was essential to ensure universal respect for the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session and of the relevant and international agreements. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that it was necessary to build up control mechanisms in order to facilitate closer cooperation between the public and private sectors, banks and other financial institutions. Money-laundering must be recognized as a criminal act, the flow of funds must be controlled so as to allow detection of illegal transactions and the international exchange of information should be strengthened.

Secondly, it was necessary to ensure a balanced approach to supply and demand reduction. To that end, his delegation supported the proposal to consolidate, within the framework of a declaration, the guiding principles of demand reduction and believed that a working group of experts should be established to prepare the draft declaration and the required definitions. Drug abuse prevention should be a component of every country's economic and social planning process.

Thirdly, the effort to combat illicit trafficking in drugs and drug abuse required the cooperation of all interested organizations and institutions, including non-governmental, professional and commercial organizations, universities and schools, sports associations and the mass media. Drug control issues should be dealt with by all relevant United Nations bodies, including the international financial institutions.

His delegation welcomed the progress achieved thus far and the active interest of the Administrative Committee on Coordination in the subject and stressed the need for continued cooperation at the field level. His country would continue to support the leading role of the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and, in particular, agreed that national drug control master plans should be encouraged. A set of guidelines for the preparation of master plans would help countries to adapt international standards to their own economic and social requirements. His delegation welcomed the practical guidance provided by UNDCP, particularly with respect to legislative measures. It also supported the convening of a special session of the General Assembly devoted to the question of the enhanced effectiveness of international action to combat illicit traffic and international crime. His country would spare no effort to support the international community's efforts to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

Mr. VIÑAS (European Community) said that the fight against drugs and drug abuse was a priority for the European Union. The European Commission shared the assessment by UNDCP of the economic and social dimensions and implications of drugs. Partners in intraregional trading arrangements must devise appropriate cooperation mechanisms to eliminate the risk that such arrangements might diminish the chances of seizing illicit drugs. If the political will to do so existed, those risks could be eliminated. The European Community was establishing the required cooperation mechanisms.

An integrated and global strategy to address drug-related issues should reflect the recognition of the interdependence of the various aspects of the phenomenon and the shared responsibility and solidarity of nations. The fight against demand, which must be waged at the national and local levels, was crucial for the success of international joint efforts, and must be all-encompassing, covering plant-based narcotic drugs, synthetic drugs and psychotropic substances.

The approach adopted by the European Commission with respect to international cooperation against drugs was guided by the Global Programme of Action and bilateral agreements between the European Union and third States, and drew upon European Community competences. Since 1987, the European Community had committed more than $140 million to combat the demand for and production of illicit drugs and to support law enforcement efforts, particularly against

money-laundering and the diversion of chemical precursors. Demand control projects, which accounted for some 60 per cent of the funds committed, adhered to the principle of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, meaning that drug abusers were deemed to be in need of medical, psychological and social care.

Another 30 per cent of the funds had been allocated to combat drug production, primarily by encouraging growers voluntarily to grow alternative crops and helping them to emerge permanently from absolute poverty. The resulting increased supply of agricultural and industrial products must be matched by increased preferential access to external markets. The European Community had granted such access to certain exports of countries members of the Andean Pact and to Central American countries. Such measures allowed for a genuine dialogue and partnership and were more effective in the short and long term than external negative measures.

Additional European Community funds had been allocated primarily to support preparation of national drug control master plans and to assist countries with capacity- and institution-building, with special emphasis on money-laundering and the diversion of chemical precursors. Such support had been provided to eastern and central European countries and to the Andean Pact countries. The agreements signed by those countries with the European Community, which would be followed by others with additional sensitive destination countries, were remarkable because they went beyond the control measures envisaged by the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The European Commission planned to continue that broad-based strategy of external assistance.

Mr. MAYOR (Director-General, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) said that the international community was losing the battle against the scourge of drug addiction as drug abuse among young people escalated worldwide. He deplored the fact that billions of dollars were spent on weapons while the funds allocated to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) had been reduced.

Although some positive steps had been taken to combat money-laundering, it was essential that it should be completely halted. Much was being done to reduce the supply of drugs and to educate in order to reduce demand. UNESCO, which had been promoting preventive education for over 20 years along with the

World Health Organization and UNDCP, believed that fostering positive values and warning of the dangers of drug abuse must be an integral part of every child's education. Teachers, decision-makers and the mass media must be mobilized for that effort. UNESCO and the European Commission had established a network of information in the field of prevention of drug abuse through education, and its newsletter, currently published in English, French and Spanish, soon also would be issued in Arabic and Russian. UNESCO and UNDCP also organized activities to involve young people in initiatives for drug prevention.

The best way to reduce demand was by empowering all human beings through education. He noted in that connection that, six years after the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, 1990), the number of illiterates, drop-outs and children not attending school had decreased. In addition to education, rigorous and courageous decisions were needed immediately, particularly for high-risk children. Governments must reshape their budget priorities to adequately fund a global strategy to combat the supply and demand of drugs. It was also essential to reflect on why children sought in drugs the support, hopes and dreams with which contemporary society was unable to provide them.

Mr. MATTHEWS (South Africa) said that his country's emergence from isolation had not been an unmixed blessing, for it had become a major transit country for international drug dealers and drug abuse among its population was increasing. It was not, however, a major producer of illicit drugs destined for international markets.

His country was very active in regional counter-narcotics efforts and cooperated closely with its neighbours. It had hosted the European Union/Southern Africa Development Community drug conference in 1995 which had worked on a draft protocol on combating illicit drugs in the region.

Money-laundering was a significant problem in South Africa, although the absence of general money-laundering legislation made it impossible to determine the extent or scope of the crime. A cabinet-level committee had drawn up a very comprehensive crime prevention strategy in May which accorded drug control high priority. Immediate measures also had been adopted in the annual police plan to deal with the problem.

South Africa faced a serious dilemma. Having fought for a long time against all the evils of a police state, its people attached the utmost

importance to human rights and civil rights. However, drug control efforts appeared to require the reintroduction of some of the instruments which in the past had been used to oppress the population. His country therefore would welcome the advice of more experienced democratic countries as to how to maintain a balance between the need to suppress the drug trade and crime in general and the need to protect human rights and civil rights. Assistance was needed, for example with respect to the education and training of the population and the police.

Mrs. BOKOVA (Bulgaria) said that the political declaration and the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session and General Assembly resolution 48/12 provided appropriate policy directives and guidelines for drug control measures. However, their implementation in practice was far from satisfactory. Adherence to the relevant United Nations drug control conventions was essential if the efforts of the international community to combat drugs were to prove successful. Her country adhered to all those conventions and had established a special programme to counter organized crime and terrorism, the illicit arms trade, money-laundering and other drug-related criminal activities.

The role of the Economic and Social Council in addressing the alarming impact of narcotic drugs on society and economic development should be further strengthened. Resident representatives of the United Nations Development Programme, in their capacity as representatives of UNDCP, should be encouraged to promote the synergy of drug control activities at the field level. The UNDCP coordination mechanisms for drug control assistance to central and eastern European countries - which were particularly vulnerable to drug-related crime owing to the inadequacy of their institutional and legislative systems and the scarcity of resources - should be improved. Her country was finalizing its national master plan on the basis of the UNDCP guidelines. The general views and concrete proposals of her Government for future cooperation with UNDCP were contained in a document submitted to the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

Project implementation was a key component of the UNDCP endeavour. Bulgaria was confronted with ever-growing problems because of its location on the so-called Balkan route of illicit trafficking. In combating illicit drug trafficking, drug abuse and drug-connected crimes, combined efforts were

required to support both national and international policies. Due attention must be paid to the full implementation and subregional ongoing projects and new projects. Bulgaria reiterated its full commitment to participate actively in the implementation of UNDCP regional projects.

Another priority in Bulgaria's cooperation with UNDCP was demand reduction through public awareness and preparedness. Activities included the training of teachers on primary prevention in schools, work with children at risk, including street children and the development of materials for university students and national campaigns against drugs. In view of the increased internationalization of the trafficking of precursors and essential chemicals, Bulgaria was placing particular emphasis on international cooperation in that field. A special working group was engaged in bringing Bulgaria's legislation into line with the relevant international legal instruments, the law of European Union countries, and also the UNDCP Model Law. The creation of a common national information system for the monitoring and control of precursors and chemicals was an area in which international technical assistance was needed. Such a system would speed up the internal and international exchange of viable data and statistics.

In view of its declining resources, UNDCP must concentrate on priority issues of drug control. At the same time, a stronger effort should be made by all countries to ensure adequate financing through an increase in voluntary contributions to UNDCP.

Bulgaria appreciated its cooperation with the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), which had helped it eliminate deficiencies in the legal and institutional system for combating drugs. It believed that the role of INCB should be strengthened and supported.

Bulgaria agreed that the United Nations system needed to improve its operational interaction with the relevant intergovernmental organizations. It also supported the proposals to convene a special session of the General Assembly on drug issues.

Ms. SOLBERG (Observer for Norway) said that the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse and the reintegration of alcohol and drug addicts into their local communities were important not only in reducing the sufferings of the individuals and families concerned, but also in reducing poverty and contributing to social development at the global level. It was disturbing that the gains made through development cooperation could easily be undermined by the

consequences of substance abuse. Norway was gratified that the importance of combating drug abuse problems and illicit trafficking in drugs had been reflected in the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action.

Norway had no difficulty in complying with the recommendations set forth in the report of the Secretary-General (E/1996/57); Norwegian penal law was already in line with the standards set by the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The law had been amended to cover all forms of money-laundering.

Norway shared the opinion expressed in the report of the Secretary-General (E/1996/57) that a well-founded framework for government action and international cooperation existed. It noted with appreciation that an increasing number of agencies in the United Nations system were addressing the issue within their respective fields of competence. At the same time, the role of UNDCP remained essential in ensuring productive cooperation between the various United Nations organizations involved and bilateral donors. Norway therefore supported the proposals aimed at widening the donor base and strengthening the financial situation of UNDCP. It planned to increase its contribution to UNDCP for 1996 by $1 million, intended for a global primary prevention initiative to be executed in close partnership with the World Health Organization and non-governmental organizations at the international, national and local levels. It hoped to make a similar annual grant for 1997-2000.

Governments and international organizations must keep up the fight against illicit drugs. Any move to liberalize the non-medical use of drugs would lead to an expansion of demand, be harmful to public health and social well-being and be contrary to existing provisions of the international drug control treaties.

It was important to make a restrictive policy part of a multidisciplinary, comprehensive approach, with health promotion, prevention and treatment measures included in the total effort. While it was gratifying that demand reduction strategies had gained more attention in recent years, they must not be allowed to overshadow the unresolved problems of illicit supply, production and trafficking.

Mr. AHMED (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) said that, with its focus on poverty eradication and sustainable human development, UNDP maintained a keen interest in the illicit drugs debate. It was clear that

poverty and the absence of attractive alternative economic opportunities were the main factors contributing to growers' continued involvement in drug production. The principal drug-growing regions were among the most impoverished and economically stagnant in the world, and their standards of living were continuing to decline. The trafficking of illicit drugs contributed to social disorganization and disintegration. Increasingly, the link between the injection of drugs and the transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus was of concern.

UNDP initiatives in drug abuse control had continued to grow in line with available resources. The introduction in 1992 of a special programme resources line of US$ 3.5 million for drug abuse prevention and control had enabled UNDP to support a range of drug-related activities in all five regions and to better integrate drug control issues into sustainable human development activities, particularly at the national level. The work of UNDP at the national, subregional, regional and global levels had been strengthened by its collaboration with UNDCP and other United Nations agencies. Under the new working arrangements with UNDCP, issued in October 1993, UNDP resident representatives had the responsibility of representing the interests of the two organizations at the country level. UNDP resident representatives were coordinating and harmonizing drug-related activities within the overall national development agenda, using such tools as the country strategy note and UNDP round-table meetings. In addition, they encouraged informal coordination through inter-agency working groups.

UNDP had judiciously used its special programme resources to buttress national-level coordination efforts by implementing a number of projects which reinforced the integration of the illicit drug issue into the wider development context and encouraged inter-agency collaboration.

At the subregional and regional levels, UNDP had on its own, and in partnership with UNDCP, launched a number of innovative activities which sought to place the issue of illicit drugs within the wider context of sustainable human development. At the global level, UNDP was involved in the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control.

UNDP had learned that the integration of drug issues into other thematic and substantive issues on which there was inter-agency consensus was an important way to promote the topic in the country, subregional and regional

context. Cross-sectoral, integrated programmes with people-centred approaches were an effective way of promoting an inter-agency collaborative approach to addressing the problem. Governments perceived UNDP drug-related assistance to be most relevant in two areas: the cross-sectoral areas, and the development of action plans which complemented the more focused drug abuse control activities of UNDCP.

Mr. LAVROV (Russian Federation) said that, given the magnitude of the drug threat in the world and its cross-border nature, no one State was in a position to effectively combat it; there must be a synergy of efforts by the world community. The basic parameters of General Assembly resolution 48/12 had proved to be correct, although the strategy should be adapted to changing realities. His delegation welcomed the consensus regarding the feasibility of convening a special session of the General Assembly on narcotic drugs. The proposals by the UNDCP Executive Director for amendments in the international conventions on narcotic drugs deserved serious consideration; nevertheless, those conventions served as an effective legal basis for international and national efforts in the field. His delegation called on all States which had not yet done so to accede to the conventions without delay. In 1996, the Russian Federation had become a party to the 1972 Protocol amending the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961.

The Russian Federation fully supported the position of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and INCB regarding the inadmissibility of the legalization of the non-medical use of narcotic drugs. It believed that UNDCP should enhance its efforts to provide technical assistance to Member States in the field of drug money-laundering and at the same time play a more substantial role in coordinating practical joint action to combat drug money-laundering.

International cooperation should be developed in the sphere of the control of the traffic in precursor chemicals. Article 12 of the 1988 Convention must be fully implemented. An important issue was to ensure punishment of those involved in illicit drug trafficking and the elimination of safe havens.

Large-scale measures to counter illicit drug trafficking and abuse were being carried out in the Russian Federation. In 1993, the conceptual guidelines for common State policy on drug abuse control had been approved. A federal programme of comprehensive measures to combat drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking for 1995-1997 had been adopted at the governmental level. A number

of related bills were being considered by the Parliament. Efforts were being stepped up to enhance control of the production and distribution of narcotic drugs. Research was under way to improve aerospace methodology for detecting illicit crops. All those activities were being coordinated by a governmental commission.

In addition to its participation in all the universal drug control treaties, the Russian Federation had 46 bilateral intergovernmental and inter-agency drug control agreements with 44 countries. Priority attention was being paid to the establishment of a system of collective drug control within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The Heads of State of the Commonwealth had adopted an inter-State programme of joint measures to combat organized crime in the territory of CIS for the period up to the year 2000, which included action to combat drugs. A multilateral agreement on combating the illicit traffic of narcotic drugs had been signed by the Ministers of the Interior of the CIS member States in 1992. His delegation believed that, given the commonality of the drug-related problems facing the CIS member States, better coordination of the UNDCP programmes for those States would be very useful. Serious consideration should be given to establishing a special unit of UNDCP for cooperation with the CIS region, and to setting up a regional bureau for CIS, which could be based in Moscow.

The Russian Federation attached great importance to the expansion of bilateral cooperation with UNDCP, and to the development of practical cooperation between UNDCP and relevant Russian agencies.

Mr. SHAH (India) said that his delegation fully associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

India was fully committed to the war against narcotic drugs; his Government had signed all three United Nations drug control conventions. The drug menace undermined the very foundations of organized society; the close connection between narcotics, gun-running and terrorism was clearly established. Narcoterrorism intrinsically violated fundamental human rights; democracies and pluralistic societies were particularly vulnerable to it. A determined effort was required on the part of all countries to tackle the threat.

Since the drug menace was a transnational problem, the United Nations was the appropriate body to address the issue and coordinate international

cooperation. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's recommendations on the need for more accurate knowledge about the economic dimensions of the illicit drug problem and for setting up mechanisms to facilitate multilateral decision-making and action against money-laundering. It also agreed that drug abuse prevention programmes should be comprehensive and multisectoral and that prevention of drug abuse by the young was of the utmost importance.

India's narcotics problem was largely transit-related, arising from its close proximity to the world's two major opiate-producing regions. Drugs originating from the so-called Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle regions flowed into India from either side and reached Western Europe, North America, and to a lesser extent other parts of the world. South-West Asia was a major source of drugs smuggled through India. 1995 had seen a spurt in narcotic seizures along that border. The flow of narcotics from South-East Asia was in much smaller quantities per drug run but was significant because of its purity and the difficulty of detection.

His Government accorded very high priority to bilateral cooperation in combating international drug trafficking and had bilateral agreements for mutual cooperation with a number of countries, which had proved to be very effective. Within South Asia, under the aegis of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), India was actively cooperating in monitoring and information activities.

India supported the proposal to convene a special session of the General Assembly in 1998 devoted to the control of narcotic drugs.

Mr. LOPES da MOTA (Portugal) said that his delegation fully supported the statement made by the representative of Italy on behalf of the European Union.

It was universally recognized that the phenomenon of drug abuse and drug trafficking had grown alarmingly in recent years. Globally, the drug problem was consuming increasing resources, representing a considerable burden for the economies and budgets of the States concerned.

In Portugal, there had been an aggravation of the problem in recent years. To confront that threat, Portugal had developed a balanced and harmonious policy in the areas of supply and demand. His Government had recently presented measures to Parliament to enhance the effectiveness of the control of the activities of drug traffickers by increasing penalties, improving criminal

investigation services and strengthening the system for the confiscation of illicit profits. A process of redefining the national drug control programme, "projecto vida", had been undertaken. Prevention was regarded as a priority, and the main objectives were to improve the capacity of the relevant public services and coordinate their activities, promote awareness and increase the participation of the public through non-governmental organizations and community bodies, and build up resources.

While States had responsibility for drug abuse control, Governments must be open to public debate in the search for adequate solutions, particularly when there were doubts about the effectiveness of some measures. It was essential to involve society in the prevention of drug abuse and in support for the rehabilitation of drug addicts.

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, based in Lisbon, was an important component of the action carried out by the European Union; its activities should contribute to a greater knowledge of the drug phenomenon at the world level.

Portugal believed that the United Nations and UNDCP, while taking into account the need for a balance in activities, should give greater attention to demand reduction. They should, as far as possible, coordinate their work with regional structures pursuing identical objectives in order to complement their efforts and make better use of resources. Portugal also hoped that other agencies of the United Nations system would pay greater attention to the problems of drugs and drug addiction in their plans of activities.

His delegation supported the proposal to convene a special session of the General Assembly on drug abuse control.

Mr. WANG Xuexian (China) said that, while progress had been made in implementing the Global Programme of Action (GPA), there was still much to be done to combat the rampant spread of drugs. Further progress would be assured by recognizing: the common responsibility of producing, consuming and transit countries to join their anti-drug efforts; the greater need on the part of developing countries for financial and technical assistance; and the importance of respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each and every country.

China faced a serious threat from transit and transnational drug trafficking, but had created a model of subregional anti-drug cooperation with

UNDCP and neighbouring countries. The Chinese Government's anti-drug policy placed equal emphasis on prohibiting the sale, cultivation and consumption of drugs, eliminating the sources of drugs, and strictly enforcing anti-drug laws. Despite the remarkable progress resulting from that policy, however, drug control remained an arduous task that required the assistance and support of the international community. China supported the convening of a special session of the General Assembly in 1998 on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

Mr. FERNANDEZ ESTIGARRIBIA (Paraguay) said that the drug problem and socio-economic development were interrelated. Moreover, consuming and producing countries could no longer be clearly distinguished. The spread of drug abuse and associated behaviours could be attributed to many factors, including the consequences of information globalization, population mobility, and the establishment of certain social models. Something was surely amiss in the world's richer societies if so many of their citizens had to resort to drugs in order to deal with their anxieties. In the poorer ones, drug cultivation often represented the only means of escape from the cycle of poverty.

One way in which the international community could deal with the continuing threat of drugs was through education designed to restore social cohesion, without attempting to single out victims and malefactors. Moreover, the exchange of views and experiences would contribute to a better understanding of the actions needed to deal with drug production and consumption in the face of new international realities.

Paraguay supported the efforts of the United Nations to strengthen the effectiveness of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) and had signed and ratified both the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The emphasis of its national anti-drug policy was shifting towards combating the laundering of illegally derived profits, and it was preparing legislation designed to punish not only direct participants in drug trafficking but also those who abetted the trade in any way. It was also planning to update its National Plan in accordance with the recommendations of INCB.

While Paraguay would continue its struggle against drug trafficking and related activities, the United Nations should also continue to play a decisive

role in providing the means for exchanging the information and technical data that would stimulate and facilitate international cooperation. The globalization and complexity of the drug problem allowed no solution other than the eradication of poverty in the broadest sense of the term.

Mr. ROBLES OROZCO (Observer for Spain) fully supported the statement made by the representative of Italy on behalf of the European Union and stressed the need for a multidisciplinary, homogeneous and coordinated international response to the drug problem. The Spanish Government considered that policies for dealing with that problem required action in the areas of prevention, assistance and rehabilitation, control of drug supplies and illicit trafficking, and money-laundering. It was in the process of developing a "culture of drug rejection" comprising: specific and explicit education on healthy lifestyles in school curricula; informational and educational activities in various social groups and through the media; attractive occupational alternatives for young people; community initiatives, especially youth organizations; international cooperation in the area of prevention; alcohol-abuse prevention programmes involving adolescents especially; and programmes aimed at combating the production and abuse of synthetic or designer drugs. Moreover, the Government's new assistance and rehabilitation programmes treated drug abusers as sick people entitled to health assistance. Special attention would be devoted to programmes for minors.

The increasingly global economy made necessary the strengthening of international coordination and cooperation in combating money-laundering, which had become one of the most threatening aspects of drug trafficking. The Spanish Government intended to update and reform its penal law to deal with issues raised in that connection, such as witness protection and the handling of confiscated assets. It also intended to develop legislation to control the chemical precursors of illicit drugs.

While significant progress had been achieved through the work of UNDCP and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), current methods of cooperation needed to be improved to deal with emerging challenges. Of particular importance in that area were the creation of an international statistical database and the promotion of alternative development programmes for developing countries.

Mr. OWADA (Japan) noted with concern that the illicit production, trafficking and use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, including synthetic drugs, was increasing in developing as well as developed countries, despite the efforts of Governments and UNDCP. He welcomed the timely response of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Economic and Social Council in establishing a course of action to be taken by UNDCP in strengthening international cooperation to control chemical precursors and their substitutes.

While attaching great importance to the General Assembly's Global Programme of Action (GPA) to combat illicit drug production, trafficking and consumption, Japan regretted that an adequate mechanism for monitoring progress in implementing that Programme had yet to be established. It therefore supported the convening of a special session of the General Assembly in 1998 as a means of generating the political impetus for effective implementation of the international conventions and instruments on drug control and of providing a forum for the discussion of measures to control stimulants and their precursors.

The Japanese Government was convinced that the United Nations should be the main focus in the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, and that within the United Nations system, UNDCP should take the lead in planning and coordinating the activities of the agencies concerned. It also supported the System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control, and therefore welcomed the collaboration among agencies at the planning stage called for by the ACC Subcommittee on Drug Control. However, he noted with regret the decline in resources being made available to UNDCP, which was straining its administrative and backstopping capabilities with regard to technical cooperation projects, and urged Member States to strengthen their commitment to international drug control.

In its follow-up to the Global Programme of Action, Japan had been carrying out educational and abuse-prevention activities at the national and local levels, with the participation of local governments and non-governmental organizations. It had also been maintaining close contact with authorities in other countries, and supported the establishment of subregional centres as an effective way to coordinate anti-drug strategy at that level. Lastly, in recognition of a causal link between poverty and the illicit production of narcotic drugs, Japan had supported development programmes aimed at achieving a supply reduction in areas of Asia and Latin America.

Mr. BONFUL (Ghana) said that his delegation fully supported the statement of the Chairman of the Group of 77 and shared the view that only a holistic, cross-sectoral and multifaceted approach would be effective in dealing with the drug menace.

The Government of Ghana had obtained positive results from various national strategies to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking, including enforcement measures, education and prevention programmes, the sensitization of the judiciary and the mass media, the involvement of local government agencies and non-governmental organizations, and the incorporation of anti-drug measures in programmes related to unemployment, health and rural development.

Ghana had been an advocate of an integrated subregional approach to the drug problem in the West African region, and it was a member of the Technical Committee charged with formulating anti-drug strategy at the subregional level under the auspices of UNDCP. Ghana called upon UNDCP to ensure that the Technical Committee should become operational, in order to deal with the illicit drug trafficking that was being facilitated by the rising cross-border trading between Ghanaians and other West African nationals.

Ghana had instituted a National Serious Fraud Office to deal with major economic crimes like money laundering, which had been facilitated by the liberalized investment climate in the industrial and financial sectors. It also called for the development of effective mechanisms for sharing information at the international level on the criminal activities and arrest records of drug dealers, in order to facilitate the eventual confiscation of such criminals' property.

Ms. TRONE (United Nations Population Fund) said that her agency was particularly interested in the linkage between drug-related problems and socio-economic development and strongly agreed that there was a need for multidisciplinary teamwork and consultation between drug-control and development-assistance organizations. Drug-related issues and population issues were similar in that the efforts needed to address them were multisectoral by nature, required multidisciplinary cooperation, and dealt at their cores with the empowerment of individuals, especially women and poor people at the margins of society. Such empowerment was instrumental in enabling women to resist the temptation of and pressures related to drug use and abuse, and had to take place at an early age through information and education.

There was also evidence of a close connection between drug use and poor reproductive health in some major cities. The drug subculture involved or condoned patterns of sexual behaviour which encouraged the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Programmes to reduce the demand for drugs must therefore be integrated into social and health policies and programmes, and it was in that light that collaboration between UNDCP and UNFPA should be seen.

As a result of the collaboration between the two organizations, a range of programmes had been implemented at the country level aimed at maximizing the advantage of the multisectoral approach, encouraging responsible behaviour, reducing the demand for drugs, promoting the healthy development of adolescents and youth, and accentuating the positive aspects of peer group interactions. The joint and integrated nature of the programmes also enabled both organizations to take advantage of economies of scale in the areas of personnel utilization, informational-materials preparation and staff training, thereby avoiding duplication of input and enhancing the impact of the activities. Such integrated programmes also empowered young people to exert control over their own lives; such empowerment was the key to a drug-free future as well as sound reproductive health.

Miss DURRANT (Jamaica) endorsed the comments made by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and said that the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) had provided invaluable assistance to national efforts aimed at narcotics control. Her Government had enacted various laws for the full implementation of the 1988 Convention and was currently discussing draft legislation on money-laundering. Jamaica was implementing various General Assembly declarations and plans of action and, at the regional and subregional levels, had signed drug abuse and drug trafficking cooperation agreements with several Latin American countries and the United States. A meeting of Caribbean States, organized by UNDCP and held in Barbados in May 1996, had underlined the urgency and legitimacy of the need for greater regional cooperation in areas such as legislation, demand reduction, law enforcement and maritime cooperation.

National efforts to enforce anti-drug measures, including demand reduction programmes, public education and eradication of marijuana had been particularly successful in 1995. Arrests, seizures of cocaine and marijuana, and seizures of boats, aircraft and land vehicles had increased significantly. The greatest

achievement in the area of drug enforcement for 1995 had been the agreement between the Government of Jamaica and UNDCP for the establishment of the Caribbean Regional Drug Training Centre (REDTRAC), scheduled to begin operation in September 1996. Her Government was counting on the support of United Nations agencies and Member Governments to continue to provide human and financial resources to ensure the survival of REDTRAC.

Despite significant achievements in the area of law enforcement, supplies of narcotic drugs to international markets and demand for those drugs had not been drastically reduced. As the supply of narcotic drugs was market-driven, initiatives to reduce supplies had to be matched by efforts to reduce demand in receiver countries. Her Government welcomed the renewed efforts undertaken in some industrialized markets to reduce demand and the steps taken by the International Monetary Fund and other international institutions to assist countries to improve their banking supervision in order to stem the practice of money-laundering.

While international assistance had focused generally on eradication and enforcement, there was a need for greater awareness of the effects of eradication on the economic well-being of small farmers engaged in illicit narcotics production and for the development of sustainable alternative production programmes. In that regard, her Government drew attention to the request of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs that UNDCP should draw on voluntary contributions from Governments in the implementation of alternative development projects.

Finally, her Government expressed serious concern regarding the direct linkage between drug trafficking and trafficking in small arms and urged all countries involved in the manufacture of arms and ammunition to take steps to improve the vigilance of their customs and port security personnel. For their part, developing countries, despite their lack of adequate police forces to control their borders and coastal waters, needed to exercise stronger vigilance to curb the influence of drug cartels and drug barons over their vulnerable societies.

Mr. GUILLEN (Observer for Peru) said that his country was engaged in a series of efforts to rehabilitate drug addicts, encourage viable economic alternatives to the production of illicit substances and confront drug trafficking and related crimes. A global strategy to tackle the problem of

drugs at the international level should include a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of existing multilateral instruments and policies and the use of resources earmarked for narcotics control by the international community. International cooperation should encompass education and prevention of drug abuse and the development of viable economic alternatives for groups involved in the production of narcotic substances.

Effective legal and interdiction initiatives were needed to tackle the criminal aspects of drug trafficking. In Peru, the national police participated in campaigns of interdiction against crimes related to drug trafficking, and intervention by armed forces personnel was reserved for cases where activities impinged on national sovereignty. Priority was given to intelligence activities. Persons who cooperated with investigations by providing reliable information about leaders of criminal organizations were afforded exceptional treatment in the penal domain. In order to reduce crops of raw materials for drug production, programmes of alternative development and selective eradication had been introduced.

His Government took the view that a study of the mechanisms which determined demand for drugs was indispensable when defining appropriate programmes of prevention and rehabilitation of drug addicts. It was not sufficient to cast responsibility upon countries where raw materials used for unlawful purposes were produced. His Government also sought to dispel existing ambiguities in international conventions concerning cultivation of the coca plant and its consumption for traditional purposes. The traditional uses of the Andean natural resource were related to the culture of the peoples of Peru and deserved the respect of the international community.

Mr. KOHNSTAMM (Netherlands) supported the comments made by the representative of Italy on behalf of the European Union and emphasized that recognition of the drug problem and an open mind regarding solutions was a necessary first step in addressing that difficult issue. Despite the many efforts to combat drug abuse, it appeared that present strategies were neither realistic nor effective. Solutions to the drug problem could only be found through a process of trial and error. His Government had tried several different and often innovative approaches, some of which had produced durable results. Special attention was given to reducing the use of hard drugs, as the damage they caused was far more serious than that caused by the use of cannabis.

separating the market for users of soft drugs from that of hard drugs, the mber of cannabis users that turned to hard drugs was remarkably low. The sic principle of separating the markets had been clearly successful and his vernment did not prosecute in cases of possession of small amounts of cannabis r personal consumption.

In the larger cities, measures had been adopted to create jobs, improve fety and security in urban centres and intensify the social assistance given drug users. Such measures had helped to ease other drug-related problems, ich were especially prevalent in larger cities. As a consequence of its refully balanced mix of policies, the Netherlands had low overdose fatality d morbidity rates among drug addicts, and the rate of infection with HIV and iseases such as hepatitis was comparatively low. While heroin, the main hard rug, had clearly lost its popularity among young people, there had been an ncrease in the use of synthetic drugs, which were gaining popularity among oungsters in Western Europe.

Considerable progress had been made in the area of law enforcement and riminal justice and in terms of public health. Since 1993, his Government had anaged to unravel over one third of the known highly organized crime yndicates, most of whose activities centred on drug trafficking. Customs fficers had achieved results using sophisticated analysis techniques at irports. The Netherlands gave high priority to criminal investigation and rosecution, with organized crime as a special target.

Supporting the view that the confiscation of the proceeds of crime was one f the most effective instruments in combating organized crime, his Government ad been one of the first to introduce measures to counter money-laundering. However, to improve their effectiveness, global application of those or similar easures was vital. In that connection, his Government called on all countries to implement internationally agreed upon measures to counter money-laundering and endorsed the appeal for closer international cooperation to confront the challenge of the drug problem.

Mr. SCAVARELLI (Observer for Uruguay) said that international and national efforts to tackle the drug problem should be based on a deep conviction that the drug phenomenon directly affected the human condition and the capacity to live in liberty, solidarity and with responsibility. The use, production and trafficking of illegal drugs and related crimes represented a real danger that

had led the Organization of American States to create a high-level working group with a mandate to define an anti-drug strategy for the hemisphere. The 10-year anniversary of the conclusion of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances should be commemorated in 1998 with a renewed commitment by the General Assembly to activities that involved all countries, regardless of their strategic position.

The balanced reduction of both the demand and the supply of illegal drugs must be the basis of any action by the international community. Planning and executing national programmes for the reduction of demand and supply and the search for more efficient applications according to the realities of each region were essential requirements for long-lasting comprehensive solutions. His Government was convinced that with the efforts and mutual respect of all countries better results would be achieved for present and future generations.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.